(d) 6 new Sub-Post Offices, 8 new Branch Post Offices and 26 new Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendras have been opened in Punjab during the financial year 2001-2002. Setting up of new Post Offices and Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendras is subject to the fulfilment of prescribed norms and availability of requisite resources.

E-billing services through Post Office

2626. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a scheme has been formulated to provide e-billing services through the post offices in some selected cities on experimental basis;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the extent to which the select post offices have been computerised and can render efficient service; and

(c) the details of the phased plans drawn up for computerisation of the post offices across the country and the programmes finalised, if any, to meet the training needs of the employees who would increasingly handle various e-services in course of time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes. Sir.

(b) The pilot project is running in 20 post offices in Bangalore having computers, modems and internet connection. It is under testing in 10 post offices in Kolkata.

(c) Computerisation of post offices and implementation of training programmes for employees during the Tenth Five Year Plan would depend on the Plan to be approved by the Planning Commission and funds allotted. Upto the Ninth Five Year Plan 1764 Post Offices have been computerised and training with regard to operating systems, networking and various application softwares has been imparted to nearly 43,000 officials.